

Senegal

General statistics

Population: 13,711,597 (2009)
Area: 196,723 km²
Independence: 4 April 1960 (France)
Capital: Dakar
Government: Semi-presidential republic
Administrative language: French
Currency: CFA franc (XOF)
GDP: 13.472 billion USD
GDP per capita: 1,026 USD
Calling code: + 221
Motto: Un Peuple, Un But, Une Foi (One People, One Goal, One Faith)
Anthem: Pincez Tous vos Koras, Frappez les Balafons



Minerals: Gold, iron ore, marble, Phosphate

Senegal has its borders to the East and North and that originates from the Fouta Djallon in Guinea. Senegal is externally bounded by the Atlantic Ocean to the west, Mauritania to the north, Mali to the east, and Guinea and Guinea-Bissau to the south; internally it almost completely surrounds The Gambia, namely on the north, east and south, exempting Gambia's short Atlantic Ocean coastline.

History:

Archaeological findings throughout the area indicate that Senegal was inhabited in prehistoric times.

Eastern Senegal was once part of the Empire of Ghana. It was founded by the Tukulor in the middle valley of the Senegal River. Islam, the dominant religion in Senegal, first came to the region in the 11th century. In the 13th and 14th centuries, the area came under the influence of the empires to the east; the Jolof Empire of Senegal also was founded during this time. In the Senegambia region, between 1300 and 1900, close to one-third of the population was enslaved.[5] Various European powers—Portugal, the Netherlands, and Great Britain—competed for trade in the area from the 15th century onward, until in 1677, France ended up in possession of what had become a minor slave trade departure point—the island of Gorée next to modern Dakar, used as a base to purchase slaves from the warring chiefdoms on the mainland.[6][7]

The first kingdoms were created around the 7th century, the Tekrou, the Namandirou kingdom and then the Djolof with distant ties to the Ghana empire. In the 14th century the Djolof kingdom became a

powerful empire having regrouped the Cayor, the Baol, the Sine and Saloum, the Waalo, the Fouta-Toro and the Bambouk kingdoms. The empire was founded by Ndiadiane N'diaye who was able to form a coalition with many ethnicities but collapsed around 1549 with the defeat and killing of Lele Fouli Fak by Amari Ngone Sobel Fall. French colonialists progressively invaded and took over all kingdoms under their governor Louis Faidherbe. Islam was introduced in Senegal between the 8th and 9th century by Berber merchants. They peacefully converted the Toucouleurs and Sarakholles who in turn propagated it. Later on, in the 11th century, the Almoravids, with the help of the Toucouleurs used Jihad as a mean of conversion. This movement faced resistance from ethnicities of traditional religion and caused them to moved away further in the country (Sineisties) and to the South(Casamance). Eventually, Berbers won a peaceful conversion thanks to the intervention of leaders like Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba, El Hadj Malick Sy, and Seydina Limamou Laye who were able to convince their followers. They saw Islam as a way to unite and fight against colonial power. The populations were getting weary of repeated jihads and forced colonization. Europeans missionaries introduced Christianity to the Sine and Casamance in the 19th century. An emblematic figure of Casamance is Aline Sitoe Diatta, a woman who led the resistance movement against European colonialists.[citation needed]

It was only in the 1850s that the French began to expand onto the Senegalese mainland (by now rid of slavery and promoting abolitionist doctrine), adding native chiefdoms such as Waalo, Cayor, Baol, and Jolof. Senegalese chiefs' resistance to the French expansion and curtailing of their lucrative slave trade was led in part by Lat-Dior, Damel (great chief) of Cayor.

In January 1959 Senegal and the French Sudan merged to form the Mali Federation, which became fully independent on 20 June 1960, as a result of the independence and the transfer of power agreement signed with France on 4 April 1960. Due to internal political difficulties, the Federation broke up on 20 August. Senegal and French Sudan (renamed the Republic of Mali) proclaimed independence. Léopold Senghor was proclaimed Senegal's first president in September 1960. Senghor was a very well read man, educated in France. He was a poet, a philosopher and personally drafted the Senegalese national anthem, "Pincez tous vos koras, frappez les balafons". As such he was not really a politician but was handed the presidency by the French authorities who saw in him a brilliant and peaceful man and not a revolutionary like Ahmed Sekou Toure of the neighboring Guinea

Later, after the breakup of the Mali Federation, President Senghor and Prime Minister Mamadou Dia governed together under a parliamentary system. Senghor always feared his Prime Minister who was a very charismatic figure and a hard-liner. In December 1962, he accused him of an attempted coup and Dia was wrongfully convicted of treason and briefly jailed. Senegal adopted a new constitution that consolidated the president's power. In 2006, the current president Abdoulaye Wade vacated the conviction and bestowed upon him a Medal of Honor. In 1980, President Senghor decided to retire from politics, and he handed power over in 1981 to his handpicked successor, Abdou Diouf. Mamadou Dia ran for reelection in 1983 against Abdou Diouf but lost. Senghor moved to France where he later died at the age of 96 having been married to a French woman.

Senegal joined with The Gambia to form the nominal confederation of Senegambia on 1 February 1982. However, the union was dissolved in 1989. Despite peace talks, a southern separatist group in the Casamance region had clashed sporadically with government forces since 1982. Senegal has had a long history of participating in international peacekeeping.[2]

Abdou Diouf was president between 1981 and 2000. He encouraged broader political participation, reduced government involvement in the economy, and widened Senegal's diplomatic engagements,

particularly with other developing nations. Domestic politics on occasion spilled over into street violence, border tensions, and a violent separatist movement in the southern region of the Casamance. Nevertheless, Senegal's commitment to democracy and human rights strengthened. Diouf served four terms as president.

In the presidential election of 1999, opposition leader Abdoulaye Wade defeated Diouf in an election deemed free and fair by international observers. Senegal experienced its second peaceful transition of power, and its first from one political party to another. On 30 December 2004 President Abdoulaye Wade announced that he would sign a peace treaty with the separatist group in the Casamance region. This, however, has yet to be implemented. There was a round of talks in 2005, but the results did not yet yield a resolution.

Climate:

The local climate is tropical with well-defined dry and humid seasons that result from northeast winter winds and southwest summer winds. The dry season (December to April) is dominated by hot, dry, harmattan wind.[9] Dakar's annual rainfall of about 600 mm (24 in) occurs between June and October when maximum temperatures average 30 °C (86.0 °F) and minimums 24.2 °C (75.6 °F); December to February maximum temperatures average 25.7 °C (78.3 °F) and minimums 18 °C (64.4 °F).[10] Interior temperatures are higher than along the coast (for example, average daily temperatures in Kaolack and Tambacounda for May are 30 °C (86.0 °F) and 32.7 °C (90.9 °F) respectively, compared to Dakar's 23.2 °C (73.8 °F)),[11] and rainfall increases substantially farther south, exceeding 1,500 mm (59.1 in) annually in some areas. In the far interior of the country, in the region of Tambacounda, particularly on the border of Mali, temperatures can reach as high as 54 °C (129.2 °F).